



**BUSADMIN F741  
Introduction to FinTech  
Fall 2025 Course Outline**

**Finance and Business Economics Area  
DeGroote School of Business  
McMaster University**

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***COURSE OBJECTIVE***

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This course provides a broad introduction to Financial Technology (FinTech), introducing you to key players and technologies in the sector and establishing a knowledge base that will enable you to critically assess this rapidly growing and highly competitive industry. This course builds on your previous learning, synthesizing diverse aspects of business and technology to instil an understanding of the challenges and opportunities in this nascent space.

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***INSTRUCTOR AND CONTACT INFORMATION***

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**Monday 19:00-21:50**  
Class location: see Mosaic

**Instructor: Dr. Katya Malinova**  
[malinovk@mcmaster.ca](mailto:malinovk@mcmaster.ca)

Office Hours: TBA and by appointment  
Course website: Avenue to Learn

**Student TA: Sima Tafti**  
[fallahts@mcmaster.ca](mailto:fallahts@mcmaster.ca)

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### ***COURSE ELEMENTS***

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|                     |                  |                 |                      |
|---------------------|------------------|-----------------|----------------------|
| Credit Value: 3     | Leadership: No   | IT skills: No   | Global view: Yes     |
| Avenue: Yes         | Ethics: Yes      | Numeracy: Yes   | Written skills: Yes  |
| Participation: Yes  | Innovation: Yes  | Group work: Yes | Oral skills: Yes     |
| Evidence-based: Yes | Experiential: No | Final Exam: No  | Guest speaker(s): No |

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### ***COURSE DESCRIPTION***

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Financial technology is at the forefront of global development and is paving the way for tectonic shifts in long established orders. It is giving rise to rapid changes in the way we make, manage, interact with, and even define, money. And while this can mean uncertainty and upheaval for incumbents, it presents a world of possibility for those able to innovate and adapt. The course will provide a broad overview of the FinTech industry and lay the groundwork for students to analyze and identify opportunities in this emerging sector.

Learning in this course is primarily through lectures and in-class discussions, but also includes readings, videos, out-of-class analysis, and collaborative group work. The subject matter will provide you with an understanding of Financial Technology and insights to critically assess the trajectory of the industry and develop new innovations in Financial Technology.

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### ***LEARNING OUTCOMES***

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The course will provide students with an introduction to Financial Technology. Specifically, it will enable students to understand the following:

- How financial services have evolved; how the industry currently operates; key players and their roles; existing products.
- How FinTech has evolved; what is driving its growth; key players and their innovations.
- The competitive landscape of FinTech.
- The technologies that underpin FinTech innovations, including blockchain technology and the related infrastructure of the decentralized finance.
- The role of entrepreneurship in the FinTech sector.

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**REQUIRED COURSE MATERIALS AND READINGS**

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Avenue registration for course content, readings and case materials

- <http://avenue.mcmaster.ca>

\$ FREE

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**OPTIONAL COURSE MATERIALS AND READINGS**

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- Michael King. *Fintech Explained: How Technology Is Transforming Financial Services*. Ebook or paperback. Available on amazon and from the University of Toronto Press.
- Readings and reference materials for each topic will be posted on A2L as the course progresses.

\$39.95-  
\$49.95

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**EVALUATION**

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**Grade Conversion**

At the end of the course your overall percentage grade will be converted to your letter grade in accordance with the following conversion scheme:

| LETTER GRADE | PERCENT | POINTS |
|--------------|---------|--------|
| A+           | 90-100  | 12     |
| A            | 85-89   | 11     |
| A-           | 80-84   | 10     |
| B+           | 75-79   | 9      |
| B            | 70-74   | 8      |
| B-           | 60-69   | 7      |
| F            | 00-59   | 0      |

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## ***EVALUATION***

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Learning in this course results primarily from in-class lectures and discussions, possibly including recorded materials and guest speaker talks, as well as out-of-class analysis. All work, except for the innovation projects and their peer assessments, will be evaluated on the individual basis. For the group projects, group members will share the same grade, adjusted by peer evaluation where warranted. Your final grade will be calculated as follows:

### **Components and Weights**

|  |              |             |
|--|--------------|-------------|
| <b>Weekly quizzes</b>                            | (individual) | 8%          |
| <b>A1: FinTech profile (report)</b>              | (individual) | 10%         |
| <b>A2: Group project (multiple deliverables)</b> | (group)      | 30%         |
| <b>A3: Evaluation of a peer group project</b>    | (individual) | 7%          |
| <b>Term test (in class)</b>                      | (individual) | 35%         |
| <b>Class Contribution</b>                        | (individual) | 10%         |
| <b>Total</b>                                     |              | <b>100%</b> |



## **Course Deliverables**

*This course has several deliverables. The overview for them is below, only to give you an idea of what to expect. **The specifics required to complete the assignments will be posted on A2L and discussed in class.***

### ***Weekly Quizzes (8%)***

In weeks 2-10, a short multiple-choice question quiz will be assigned on the A2L portal of the course webpage. A sample non-graded quiz will be posted in week 1. The grade will be based on your best 8 (out of 9) graded quizzes. No make-up quizzes will be offered. If a student misses a quiz for legitimate reasons, the weight will be reallocated to the term test.

### ***Assignment 1 (10%): FinTech profile***

This assignment is worth 10% of your final grade and will be marked individually. You will choose a FinTech company from a list provided to you and you will be required to provide a company profile. The deliverable is a written report.

***Due: Wed Oct 15, 11:59pm***

### ***Assignment 2 (30%): Group project.***

You will work in groups to deliver a report on integrating novel FinTech-related features into existing firms/financial institutions. Details, questions, and requirements for this project will be posted on A2L. Several deliverables are required for this assignment: a written report, a 2-page summary, and an in-class group presentation.

***Due Dates: Wed Nov 12 (report and summary), Nov 24/Dec 01 (presentations; slides due the day before your team's presentation).***

### ***Assignment 3 (7%): Peer evaluation of group proposals and questions for the team***

You will be assigned another team's proposal to evaluate and to prepare a set of questions for the presenting team. Deliverable: a brief evaluation and questions for the team.

***Due Dates: Nov 23/Nov 30 (the day before the peer team's presentation).***

### ***Class Contribution 10%***

You are expected to actively participate in each class and to contribute to the in-class discussion, for instance, by asking and answering questions. Participation grades will be based on an assessment of a variety of factors, including the quantity and the quality of your in-class contributions. You must have a name card with your **first and last name** clearly written and displayed in front of you for every class. In addition, you are expected to attend all group presentations (not just your own) and actively participate with questions. Failure to attend presentations without valid justification will result in a reduction of your contribution grade.

### ***Term Test (35%)***

A term test (closed-book) will assess students' understanding and application of course contents at an individual level and will be held in-person in-class on **Monday, November 17**. A formula sheet with restricted content will be permitted, as well as a calculator (any). The test is 150 minutes long. The test will consist of multiple choice and/or short answer questions. Additional details on content coverage and sample questions will be posted on the A2L.

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### ***COMMUNICATION AND FEEDBACK***

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Students that are uncomfortable in directly approaching an instructor regarding a course concern may send a confidential and anonymous email to the respective Area Chair or Associate Dean:

<http://mbastudent.degroote.mcmaster.ca/contact/anonymous/>

Students who wish to correspond with instructors or TAs directly via email must send messages that originate from their official McMaster University email account. This protects the confidentiality and sensitivity of information as well as confirms the identity of the student. Emails regarding course issues should NOT be sent to the Administrative Assistant.

Instructors are encouraged to conduct an informal course review with students by Week #4 to allow time for modifications in curriculum delivery. Instructors should provide evaluation feedback for at least 10% of the final grade to students prior to Week #8 in the term.

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### ***ACADEMIC INTEGRITY***

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You are expected to exhibit honesty and use ethical behaviour in all aspects of the learning process. Academic credentials you earn are rooted in principles of honesty and academic integrity.

Academic dishonesty is to knowingly act or fail to act in a way that results or could result in unearned academic credit or advantage. This behaviour can result in serious consequences, e.g. the grade of zero on an assignment, loss of credit with a notation on the transcript (notation reads: "Grade of F assigned for academic dishonesty"), and/or suspension or expulsion from the university.

It is your responsibility to understand what constitutes academic dishonesty. For information on the various types of academic dishonesty please refer to the Academic Integrity Policy, located at:

[www.mcmaster.ca/academicintegrity](http://www.mcmaster.ca/academicintegrity)



Students are responsible for being aware of and demonstrating behaviour that is honest and ethical in their academic work. Such behaviour includes:

- following the expectations articulated by instructors for referencing sources of information and for group work;
- asking for clarification of expectations as necessary;
- identifying testing situations that may allow copying;
- preventing their work from being used by others (e.g., protecting access to computer files); and
- adhering to the principles of academic integrity when conducting and reporting research.

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### ***AUTHENTICITY/PLAGIARISM DETECTION***

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**Some courses may** use a web-based service (Turnitin.com) to reveal authenticity and ownership of student submitted work. For courses using such software, students will be expected to submit their work electronically either directly to Turnitin.com or via an online learning platform (e.g. A2L, etc.) using plagiarism detection (a service supported by Turnitin.com) so it can be checked for academic dishonesty.

Students who do not wish their work to be submitted through the plagiarism detection software must inform the Instructor before the assignment is due. No penalty will be assigned to a student who does not submit work to the plagiarism detection software.

**All submitted work is subject to normal verification that standards of academic integrity have been upheld** (e.g., on-line search, other software, etc.). For more details about McMaster's use of Turnitin.com please go to [www.mcmaster.ca/academicintegrity](http://www.mcmaster.ca/academicintegrity).

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### ***COURSES WITH AN ONLINE ELEMENT***

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**All courses** use some online elements (e.g. e-mail, Avenue to Learn (A2L), LearnLink, web pages, capa, Moodle, ThinkingCap, etc.). Students should be aware that, when they access the electronic components of a course using these elements, private information such as first and last names, user names for the McMaster e-mail accounts, and program affiliation may become apparent to all other students in the same course.

Students may be required to use the Respondus LockDown Browser and Respondus Monitor. The Respondus LockDown Browser is a downloadable program that allows a student to take an Avenue to



Learn quiz in a secure environment. Quizzes can be set to use LockDown Browser or LockDown Browser.

For more details about McMaster's use of Respondus Lockdown Browser please go to <https://avenuehelp.mcmaster.ca/exec/respondus-lockdown-browser-and-respondus-monitor/>

The available information is dependent on the technology used. Continuation in a course that uses online elements will be deemed consent to this disclosure. If you have any questions or concerns about such disclosure, please discuss this with the course instructor.

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### ***ONLINE PROCTORING***

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**Some courses may** use online proctoring software for tests and exams. This software may require students to turn on their video camera, present identification, monitor and record their computer activities, and/or lock/restrict their browser or other applications/software during tests or exams. This software may be required to be installed before the test/exam begins.

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### ***CONDUCT EXPECTATIONS***

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As a McMaster student, you have the right to experience, and the responsibility to demonstrate, respectful and dignified interactions within all of our living, learning and working communities. These expectations are described in the [Code of Student Rights & Responsibilities](#) (the "Code"). All students share the responsibility of maintaining a positive environment for the academic and personal growth of all McMaster community members, **whether in person or online**.

It is essential that students be mindful of their interactions online, as the Code remains in effect in virtual learning environments. The Code applies to any interactions that adversely affect, disrupt, or interfere with reasonable participation in University activities. Student disruptions or behaviours that interfere with university functions on online platforms (e.g. use of Avenue 2 Learn, WebEx, Teams, or Zoom for delivery), will be taken very seriously and will be investigated. Outcomes may include restriction or removal of the involved students' access to these platforms.

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### ***ATTENDANCE***

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Arriving late or missing class disrupts the learning experience for both you and your peers. Punctuality and attendance are crucial to maintaining a respectful, professional and productive environment for everyone, including our faculty.

Instructors may use Top Hat in their course in a variety of ways, including to capture attendance in their classes. Attendance is recorded by submitting a unique 4-digit code displayed in your physical classroom using your personal device.

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### ***MISSED ACADEMIC WORK***

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#### ***Missed Mid-Term Examinations / Tests / Class Participation***

Please do not use the online [McMaster Student Absence Form \(MSAF\)](#) as this is for Undergraduate students only. The MBA program will not accept an MSAF.

When students miss regularly scheduled term work which contributes 10% or more to the final grade, for legitimate reasons as determined by the DSB Student Services – Academic Office (DSSAO (DSB Student Services Academic Office)), the activity necessary to compensate for the missed work will be determined by the course instructor. The compensatory activities assigned will vary with the nature of the course and the missed requirement. They include, but are not restricted to, an alternative assignment, a rescheduled midterm exam, or re-weighting the marks for the missed component to other mark components. Documentation explaining such missed work must be provided to the DSSAO (DSB Student Services Academic Office) within five (5) working days of the scheduled date for completion of the work.

Acceptable reasons for missed work, along with the [Petition for Missed Term Work](#) and the [MBA Student McMaster University Student Health Certificate](#), can be found on the DeGroote MBA Student website ([mbastudent.degroote.mcmaster.ca](http://mbastudent.degroote.mcmaster.ca)). Please direct any questions about acceptable documentation to the MBA Academic Advisors ([askmba@mcmaster.ca](mailto:askmba@mcmaster.ca)).

University policy states that a student may submit a maximum of three (3) [Petition for Missed Term Work](#) per academic year, after which the student must meet with the Director of the program.

If term work is missed without an approved reason, students will receive a grade of zero (0) for that component.

#### **Missed Final Examinations**

Students must be available for the duration of the posted exam period regardless of their personal exam schedule. This is to ensure student availability throughout the entire exam period in the event that an exam must be rescheduled due to unforeseen circumstances (university closure, power



outage, storm policy, etc.). A student who misses a final examination without valid reason will receive a mark of 0 on the examination.

Students who have missed a final exam for a valid reason can apply to the DSSAO (DSB Student Services Academic Office) to write a deferred examination by submitting an [Application for Deferring a Final Exam](#) with supporting documentation. The application must be made within five days of the scheduled exam.

The [Application for Deferring a Final Exam](#) and the [MBA Student McMaster University Student Health Certificate](#) can be found on the DeGroote MBA Current Student website ([mbastudent.degroote.mcmaster.ca](http://mbastudent.degroote.mcmaster.ca))

Deferred examination privileges, if granted, are normally satisfied during the examination period at the end of the following semester. In select cases, the deferred examination may be written at a time facilitated by the DSSAO (DSB Student Services Academic Office) (DSB Student Services Academic Office) and agreed to by the course instructor.

Requests for a second deferral or rescheduling of a deferred examination will not be considered.

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### ***ACADEMIC ACCOMMODATION FOR STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES***

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Student Accessibility Services (SAS) offers various support services for students with disabilities. Students are required to inform SAS of accommodation needs for course work at the outset of term. Students must forward a copy of such SAS accommodation to the instructor normally, within the first three (3) weeks of classes by setting up an appointment with the instructor. If a student with a disability chooses NOT to take advantage of an SAS accommodation and chooses to sit for a regular exam, a petition for relief may not be filed after the examination is complete. The SAS website is:

<http://sas.mcmaster.ca>

#### ***Use of Test Accommodations at McMaster University Burlington Campus Ron Joyce Centre***

Whereas Student Accessibility Services (SAS), on Main Campus, determines all MBA student accommodations, the MBA Faculty Office manages the coordination of accommodations for tests, midterms, and exams at the Ron Joyce Centre in Burlington.

#### **Process for Students**

- SAS will now be using our online system, MySAS Portal, for graduate students to share accommodation letters with their Instructors and their Faculty/Program. Students will be

responsible to activate their accommodations on a term-by-term basis and the approved accommodation letter will be directly sent to the Instructor.

- Students must engage the DSSAO (DSB Student Services Academic Office) to implement their accommodation(s) (e.g., extra-time, memory aid, etc.) for each upcoming test, midterm, or exam, at least two weeks in advance. Students can do this by emailing DeGroote MBA SAS scheduling office at [DSBSAS@mcmaster.ca](mailto:DSBSAS@mcmaster.ca). If a student cannot meet this deadline, they should contact [DSBSAS@mcmaster.ca](mailto:DSBSAS@mcmaster.ca) to discuss alternative arrangements. The program is committed to exploring flexibilities where possible to support students.
- All tests, midterms, and exams are booked synchronously with the class's start time. Any deviations from the start time (e.g. start earlier than the class to enable completion at the same end time) requires a discussion with their instructor on protocol at the time of accommodation activation.
- Students will leverage the accommodation (e.g., extra-time, memory aid, etc.), in a designated testing room. Rooms will be booked according to the student's SAS accommodation. Unless the accommodation states otherwise, students should expect that they will be writing in a room with other students. One or more invigilators will always be in the room.
- Following the request to implement the accommodation(s), [dsbsas@mcmaster.ca](mailto:dsbsas@mcmaster.ca) will reach out to the student with their test, midterm, or exam details, including the date, time, and room number. As there may be other students writing tests in the room, we ask that students enter the room quietly and leave all personal items at the front of the room.

All policies and procedures, including restroom access, how extra-time is allocated for assessments under Universal Design, and the submission of memory aids in advance, are consistent with those of SAS on Main Campus. The only variance in procedure is communication around, and physical location of, assessment. There is not a dedicated testing space at RJC. Existing classrooms and lecture halls will be used for most testing. All SAS-approved accommodations will be honoured by our staff; however, core testing elements are not eliminated in alternative testing formats. Students should expect and plan for invigilation, incidental noise, and other potential distractions.

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### ***ACADEMIC ACCOMMODATION FOR RELIGIOUS, INDIGENOUS OR SPIRITUAL OBSERVANCES (RISO)***

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Students requiring academic accommodation based on religious, indigenous or spiritual observances should follow the procedures set out in the [RISO](#) policy. Students should submit their request to the DSSAO (DSB Student Services Academic Office) ***normally within 10 working days*** of the beginning of term in which they anticipate a need for accommodation. Students should also contact their instructors as soon as possible to make alternative arrangements for classes, assignments, and tests.



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### ***COPYRIGHT AND RECORDING***

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Students are advised that lectures, demonstrations, performances, and any other course material provided by an instructor include copyright protected works. The Copyright Act and copyright law protect every original literary, dramatic, musical and artistic work, **including lectures** by University instructors.

The recording of lectures, tutorials, or other methods of instruction may occur during a course. Recording may be done by either the instructor for the purpose of authorized distribution, or by a student for the purpose of personal study. Students should be aware that their voice and/or image may be recorded by others during the class. Please speak with the instructor if this is a concern for you.

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### ***POTENTIAL MODIFICATION TO THE COURSE***

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The instructor and university reserve the right to modify elements of the course during the term. The university may change the dates and deadlines for any or all courses in extreme circumstances. If either type of modification becomes necessary, reasonable notice and communication with the students will be given with explanation and the opportunity to comment on changes. It is the responsibility of the student to check their McMaster email and course websites weekly during the term and to note any changes.

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### ***RESEARCH USING HUMAN SUBJECTS***

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#### ***ONLY IF APPLICABLE***

Research involving human participants is premised on a fundamental moral commitment to advancing human welfare, knowledge, and understanding. As a research intensive institution, McMaster University shares this commitment in its promotion of responsible research. The fundamental imperative of research involving human participation is respect for human dignity and well-being. To this end, the University endorses the ethical principles cited in the Tri-Council Policy Statement: Ethical Conduct for Research Involving Humans:

<http://www.pre.ethics.gc.ca>

McMaster University has mandated its Research Ethics Boards to ensure that all research investigations involving human participants are in compliance with the Tri-Council Policy Statement.

The University is committed, through its Research Ethics Boards, to assisting the research community in identifying and addressing ethical issues inherent in research, recognizing that all members of the University share a commitment to maintaining the highest possible standards in research involving humans.

If you are conducting original research, it is vital that you behave in an ethical manner. For example, everyone you speak to must be made aware of your reasons for eliciting their responses and consent to providing information. Furthermore, you must ensure everyone understands that participation is entirely voluntary. Please refer to the following website for more information about McMaster University's research ethics guidelines:

<http://reo.mcmaster.ca/>

Organizations that you are working with are likely to prefer that some information be treated as confidential. Ensure that you clarify the status of all information that you receive from your client. You **MUST** respect this request and cannot present this information in class or communicate it in any form, nor can you discuss it outside your group. Furthermore, you must continue to respect this confidentiality even after the course is over.

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### ***ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF COURSE POLICIES***

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Your registration and continuous participation (e.g. on A2L, in the classroom, etc.) to the various learning activities of MBA F741 will be considered to be an implicit acknowledgement of the course policies outlined above, or of any other that may be announced during lecture and/or on A2L. **It is your responsibility to read this course outline, to familiarize yourself with the course policies and to act accordingly.**

Lack of awareness of the course policies **cannot be invoked** at any point during this course for failure to meet them. It is your responsibility to ask for clarification on any policies that you do not understand.

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### ***ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE***

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Students may use generative AI in this course in accordance with the guidelines outlined for each assessment, and so long as the use of generative AI is referenced and cited following citation instructions given in the syllabus. Use of generative AI outside assessment guidelines or without citation will constitute academic dishonesty. It is the student's responsibility to be clear on the limitations for use for each assessment and to be clear on the expectations for citation and reference and to do so appropriately.

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**TENTATIVE COURSE SCHEDULE**

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**MBA F741: Introduction to FinTech**  
**Fall 2025 Course Schedule**

The topics listed are tentative and may be adjusted following the in-class discussions and/or any significant developments in the space

| Week | Date     | Topics and Activities  |
|------|----------|--|
| 1    | Sept. 8  | What is FinTech? Why now?  |
| 2    | Sept. 15 | Intro to Payments. How money moves. Main pain points.  |
| 3    | Sept. 22 | <b>Assignment 1 posted.</b><br>Innovation in Payments. Open Banking.   |
| 4    | Sept. 29 | Foundations of blockchain I: What is it? Consensus protocols. Smart Contracts.<br><b>Group self-selection closes on Tuesday, Sept 30, 11:59pm</b>  |
| 5    | Oct. 6   | <b>Assignment 2 (group project) posted. Groups finalized.</b><br>Foundations of blockchain II. Scalability, layer 2 solutions.   |
| 7    | Oct. 13  | <b>Thanksgiving holiday. No in-person class. Asynch materials on Stablecoins, Crypto-regulation, Tokenization will be posted on A2L.</b><br><b><u>Weekly quiz.</u></b><br><b>Assignment 1 due Wednesday, October 15, 11:59pm</b> |
| 8    | Oct. 20  | Discussion and key points of the asynch materials: Stablecoins. Crypto-regulation. CBDC. Financing and Tokenization.   |

| Week | Date    | Topics and Activities   |
|------|---------|---|
| 9    | Oct. 27 | Asset Tokenization cont'd. Intro to Decentralized Finance (DeFi). Trading Crypto-assets.  |
| 10   | Nov. 3  | FinTech in Lending and Credit   |
| 11   | Nov. 10 | FinTech in Wealth Management and Personal Finance<br><b>Group Project White Paper and Exec Summary Due Wed, Nov 12, 11:59pm</b>                                 |
| 11   | Nov. 17 | <b>Presentation dates and peer group projects assigned (Assignment 3).<br/>Term Test. In-person. In class. Room(s) TBA.</b>                                     |
| 12   | Nov. 24 | Group Project Presentations. Mandatory attendance.<br><b>Assignments 2 and 3: Slides and peer questions for these presentations due Sunday, Nov 23, 11:59pm</b> |
| 13   | Dec. 1  | Group Project Presentations. Mandatory attendance.<br><b>Assignments 2 and 3: Slides and peer questions for these presentations due Sunday, Nov 30, 11:59pm</b> |

***\*Please note that in addition to the assessments outlined in the table above, the course requires weekly participation/class contribution and weekly A2L quizzes, as described under course evaluation***

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